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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NICOSIA 000880

SIPDIS

DEPARMENT FOR EUR/SE

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [TR](#) [CY](#)

SUBJECT: CYPRUS: "RULING" TURKISH CYPRIOT PARTY GROWING
DISILLUSIONED WITH CHRISTOFIAS AND AKEL

REF: A. RE: NICOSIA 836

[1](#)B. NICOSIA 650

Classified By: By Ambassador Frank C. Urbancic for reasons 1.4(b) and
1.4 (d)

1.(C) Summary: An inconclusive October 22 meeting between the "ruling" Republican Turkish Party (CTP) and RoC President Demetris Christofias's AKEL is symptomatic of growing CTP disillusionment, at least at the leadership level, with its hitherto traditional Greek Cypriot (G/C) allies. CTP's main grievance is the slow pace of Cyprus negotiations, which the party blames on Christofias's refusal to use a renamed Annan Plan as the basis for the present UN-brokered process. Christofias's rejection of Annan borders on perfidy for CTP, which claims to have spent the past three years jointly working out the bugs in the plan with AKEL. T/C allegations that the Greek Cypriots are leaking information on the negotiations to gain leverage have further soured relations with CTP. End Summary.

Speed up the Process! Use the Annan Plan!

[1](#)2. (C) Unal Findik, "ruling" Republican Turkish Party (CTP) Central Committee member, told Poloff on October 30 that the October 22 CTP-AKEL leadership meeting was cordial, if inconclusive. Findik, who accompanied CTP Number Two Omer Kalyoncu to the meeting, said that discussions over accelerating the UN-brokered peace process dominated the encounter. Andros Kyprianou, an RoC MP and AKEL spokesman, was the main representative from the G/C party. Findik said that speeding up the UN-brokered process, which he said was "dragging" badly, was not matter of meeting twice a week vice the present once. Rather, he said that CTP bluntly told AKEL that the talks needed the framework of the Annan Plan (without naming the plan or advertising its use) if there would be any hope of wrapping up negotiations in a timely manner, i.e., by mid 2009, an unwritten compromise date between the two sides. He claimed that Kyprianou had said he was not "against the idea." That said, Findik complained that the T/Cs still saw no signs that this was in fact the case or that Kyprianou's concurrence would have any influence on the G/C position. (Note: Per Ref A, T/C Negotiator Ozdil Nami, also a "deputy" from CTP, broached the same idea with the Ambassador, but said he hesitated to bring up using the Annan Plan with the Greek Cypriots for fear of a backlash. End Note).

[1](#)3. (C) Findik said that CTP and AKEL had met regularly over a three-year period after the 2004 G/C rejection of Annan to discuss improving the plan to make it acceptable to the Greek

Cypriots. He claimed, by way of example, that the two sides had even ironed out their differences over the composition of the presidential council; now, however, the G/Cs reject a council in favor of a rotating presidency. He added that minutes of all the meetings existed; in fact, he had often been the notetaker. Findik even said that in October 2007, Kyprianou had asked CTP to indirectly support Christofias by emphasizing a "federal" solution and making Christofias's life "easy." In return, Kyprianou promised that Christofias, if elected, would use the Annan Plan as the basis for the negotiations (of course without naming it as such).

"AKEL is a Bigoted Leftist Party"

¶4. (C) Probably the best indicator of growing CTP frustration with AKEL is an October 29 television interview by Kutlay Erk, Talat,s special envoy for international relations. Erk, a bicommunalist of long standing on the liberal wing of CTP, dubbed AKEL a "bigoted" leftist party, adding that, while he trusted Christofias, sincerity, CTP still had not "forgotten 2004." As late as this spring, Talat,s press spokesman, Hasan Ercakica, in a conversation with Poloff jokingly dismissed Erk as someone who did not yet "understand" the realities about the G/Cs. Kalyoncu long has expressed to us his consternation over AKEL's timidity and what he termed its "nationalist bent," dubbing it a "Hellenistic" communist party. On a brighter note, some in CTP have told us that its rank-and-file membership is more positively disposed to AKEL than the leadership (Ref B).

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"Leaking is harming the Process"

¶5. (C) Findik said that CTP had urged AKEL at the October 22 meeting to stop the leaking of information on the negotiations, which he said was "harming the process." Kyprianou denied that the G/Cs were leaking and blamed UNFICYP officials instead. Findik found the accusation not credible, and said that Christofias was trying to create, though press leaks, an agenda that he could impose on the T/Cs. As proof, he cited a recent story in the G/C daily "Politis," which was picked up by the T/C press on October 30, in which Christofias allegedly offered Turkish Cypriots residing on G/C property long-term leases (15-20 years) before transfer to the rightful owners. Findik, whose brother chaired the T/C property working group, said that a similar suggestion had been made to the Turkish Cypriots during the preparatory phase of talks, but was quickly rejected.

¶6. (C) Mehmet Dana, a member of Talat,s negotiating team, said that Talat and Christofias had discussed the issue of leaks during the tete-a-tete portion of their November 3 meeting. Dana said that if the leaks did not stop, the Turkish Cypriots might have to provide public information -- which he underscored was not a desired outcome -- given the plethora of T/C press inquiries they were receiving on stories in the G/C press based on allegedly leaked information.

Comment:

¶7. (C) Bad blood will continue to affect AKEL-CTP relations barring a meaningful gesture by Christofias to break down deep-seated T/C suspicions of G/C intentions. Turkish Cypriots and some in the international community perceive that such a moment came -- and was lost -- after the leaders, May 23 agreement, when Christofias agreed to the principle of two constituent states, a key Annan Plan

principle, only to walk it back after taking fire from his nationalist coalition partners. Consequently, many in CTP continue to view AKEL as weak-willed and opportunistic, prime facia evidence being Christofias's last minute rejection of the Annan Plan in 2004, his decision to align AKEL with former RoC President Tassos Papadopoulos in a coalition government, and, now, his refusal, even discretely, to use the Annan Plan as a basis for negotiations despite alleged promises his party made to the contrary.

Urbancic